

# First Harbour Towers

## Architecture of First Harbour Towers



Night view showing "eyebrows", stacked balconies, and flood-lit parking structures. (Photo: Joyce Owens)

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Concrete hyperbolic paraboloid parking pods and ornamental block and textured brick perimeter wall give street appeal. (Photo: Joyce Owens)

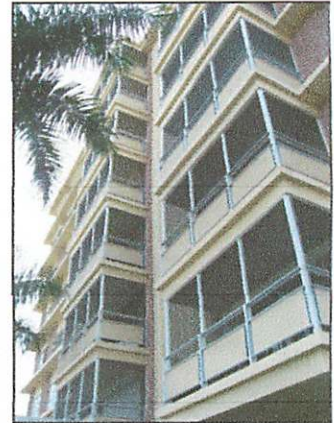
Recently our attention was drawn to the significant history of our building. First Harbour Towers was featured in the exhibit of Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Southwest Florida, shown at the Southwest Florida Museum of History from mid-November 2011 through mid-January 2012. (<http://www.mcmo-swfl.com/>) Also, associated with the exhibit was a December 7<sup>th</sup> walking tour of Fort Myers architecture which culminated in a reception at First Harbour Towers, which was generously hosted by many of our residents.

Joyce Owens, AIA, curated the McMo exhibit. Joyce is a local architect who loves mid-century modern design, and she was the driving force behind a large group of volunteers who photographed buildings, wrote descriptive text, researched building his-

tories and architects' lives, designed and built exhibit panels, established an interactive map of local mid-century architecture, and designed a website devoted to the exhibit.

From Joyce's description of First Harbour Towers, "While true modernism is defined as the 'simplification of form and subtraction of ornament from the structure', this first residential tower built in the area is modern but also rich in detail and warm in perception. ... Cantilevered concrete 'eyebrows' delineate each floor and create horizontal lines that reduce the perception of its height. A combination of dark brick, pale metal panels and stacked balconies define the building and provide visual interest. Decorative concrete block and patterned brick detailing give it human scale. Even the piling design created by structural engineer Hector F. J. Estrup was revolutionary for its day." (<http://www.mcmo-swfl.com/projects/featured/FirstHarbourTowers.html>)

Joyce Owens has been chosen by our Board to study our building, parking structures, and perimeter wall and to give us a detailed engineering report of what is needed to restore and maintain them. Not only is she competent to



Stacked balconies of First Harbour Towers. (Photo: Donna McQuade)

take on this project, she is very dedicated to preserving the mid-century features of our property and to restoring them with similar materials using the original designs. With her as a consultant, we need not fear that our building might lose some of its mid-century modern charm. She will be working with Mike Childs and his Building Committee. You may see her and her engineer at First Harbour Towers in the near future, as they study the various problem areas both outside and inside the building.



Joyce Owens, AIA  
(Photo: David Michael, Fort Myers Florida Weekly)